

ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	VC1-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	L-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00	ISN-00	OIC-00	OIG-00
	OMB-00	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	ISNE-00	SP-00
	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	T-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	PRM-00
	DRL-00	G-00	SAS-00	/000W			

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6757

INFO EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

SECDEF WASHDC

NSC WASHDC

CJCS WASHDC

USMISSION USNATO

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 001978

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/08/2016

TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PHUM, NL

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/DETAINEES: SECRET PRISONS COULD BECOME
ELECTION ISSUE

REF: STATE 146996

Classified By: Amb. Roland E. Arnall; reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: Dutch press and parliamentarians of all stripes are expressing disappointment and/or outrage over the revelation of CIA-operated secret prisons for high-value detainees.

Bot has been called to appear at an emergency debate in Parliament on September 13. Prime Minister Balkenende has also expressed concern. As a result of the prison revelations, the subject of CIA flights will also be reopened here. With the Dutch elections less than three months away, debate on both subjects is likely to be intense. End summary.

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Media Criticism Is Intense

2. (U) Dutch press coverage of the revelation that the CIA operated secret prisons for high-value detainees, including

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possibly in Europe, has run from unfavorable to hostile. Most papers concentrated on factual reporting of the emerging political controversy, while at least two (independent left NSC Handelsblad and left of center Trouw) carried intensely hostile commentary. NSC Handelsblad blasted the U.S. for deceiving its allies and ignoring international human rights conventions, and Trouw reported from Washington that the President's speech was nothing but a political ploy in the run-up to the U.S. mid-term elections. Several popular pundits stressed that the President's admissions mean nothing, as long as Guantanamo remains open and the use of secret prisons and harsh interrogation methods are not entirely repudiated.

Parliamentary rivals pillory FM Bot

3. (C) Parliamentary foreign policy spokesmen from all major parties also reacted negatively to the President's speech. MP Henk Jan Ormel, parliamentary foreign policy spokesman for senior coalition partner Christian Democrats (CDA), remarked in hearings that, "This is not how you treat an ally." Opposition Labor party (PvdA) foreign policy spokesman Bert Koenders added, "Our trust in the U.S. has been damaged," and demanded that the Foreign Minister repair the damage.

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[REDACTED]
An emergency debate on the issue is now scheduled for Wednesday, September 13.

4. (C) D66 MP Lousewies van der Laan, whose party recently withdrew from the coalition government, forcing early elections, attacked Bot for not having forced the U.S. "to be open about the issue." A number of other spokesmen,

[REDACTED] also criticized Bot for either deliberately deceiving the Dutch people by not revealing the presence of the prisons earlier, or for being naive and overly "trusting" of the United States. Parliament has scheduled a plenary debate for Wednesday, September 13, [REDACTED]

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Government Reaction

5. (C) Prime Minister Balkenende on September 8 expressed disappointment about the revelation of the secret prisons

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during his weekly press conference, stating that it was "too bad this has happened this way." [REDACTED]

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Foreign Minister Bot publicly noted that he was "suprised" by the revelations, but denied feeling "had" by the U.S. He stressed that there should not be "too many such cases" of Allies keeping secrets from each other, and said that he would be seeking additional clarification from the USG.

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